

AGENDA ITEM #10

September 13, 2002

To: Delta Protection Commission
From: Lori Clamurro, Delta Protection Commission Staff
Subject: Proposed Delta Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D)
Council and Area
(For Public Hearing and Commission Action)

Staff Recommendation:

- Consider the concerns raised at the three community meetings, and accept the Agriculture Committee's recommended Delta RC&D Council membership and the boundary of the Delta RC&D Area; and
- Discuss the draft Delta RC&D Council application, and suggest final changes before it is submitted to the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture.

Background

At its September 2001 meeting, the Delta Protection Commission directed its staff to pursue the establishment of a RC&D Council for the Delta area, and designated the Agriculture Committee to act as the Steering Committee through which this would occur. Since January 2002, Delta Protection Commission staff has held several meetings with local entities and communities to discuss the RC&D program, and determine whether to submit an application to U.S. Dept. of Agriculture to establish a RC&D Council for the Delta area. Initial meetings were held in January and February 2002 with County Farm Bureaus, County Agriculture Commissioners, local Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), and local land trusts in the five Delta counties. There was some concern over reconciling the proposed Delta RC&D Area to match up with existing RCD boundaries, but generally, there was support for the program and proposed application for funding.

Since March 2002, Delta Protection Commission staff has been working on the application that will be submitted to U.S. Dept. of Agriculture in October. In April and June 2002, the Agriculture Committee reviewed and provided input on proposed Council membership and Area boundaries, the draft interim Area Plan, and the draft application. The Agriculture Committee also directed Delta Protection Commission staff to hold three additional public meetings on the RC&D program, to generate broader public support. The three community meetings were held on July 25, August 1, and August 8, 2002.

Community Meetings: Issues Raised and Responses

Generally, there has been broad interest in and support for the proposed RC&D Council. There has been positive press reporting (Stockton Record). Several letters of support have been received from San Joaquin Resource Conservation District, the Bethel Island Marketing Alliance, Bethel Island Chamber of Commerce, and Senator Tom Torlakson.

At the August 8 meeting at Roberts Union Farm Center, about five people expressed concern about the proposed program; these are described below.

Comment 1: The RC&D Program is an inappropriate use of tax dollars.

Response: RC&D is a federally authorized program, with a specified budget. Whether a Council is established for the Delta will have no impact on the money currently authorized for the program nationwide.

Comment 2: The RC&D Program would be ineffective at resolving Delta agricultural issues, which are global.

Response: The Delta RC&D Steering Committee does not claim that a Delta RC&D Council will solve all of the Delta's economic problems (such as competition from foreign commodities); it would merely offer assistance to local communities in attempting to improve local natural and economic conditions through implementation of local programs.

Comment 3: If Cities are included on the RC&D Council, (in Secondary Zone of the Delta), they will usurp all the resources of the Council.

Comment 4: Local citizens need to have the majority of seats on the RC&D Council.

Response: The RC&D Council will adopt Bylaws that will determine how many people will sit on the Council, and how much voting power each representative will have. For example, if the Council desires a predominantly rural agricultural character, the Bylaws may include representatives of nearby Cities, but perhaps as non-voting members of the Council. Staff is recommending a Council with no government agency representatives to start. Members/seats could be added later.

Comment 5: There should be a way to remove Council members who are not representing community interests.

Response: Representatives sitting on the RC&D Council will have been selected by their respective constituencies. Procedures for removing Council members who prove to be unsatisfactory to their constituents can also be addressed in the RC&D Council's Bylaws and through local election processes.

Agriculture Committee Recommendation

The following potential configurations of the Delta RC&D Council (described more fully in Attachment 1), and potential RC&D Area to be covered by the application, were considered by the Agriculture Committee at its August 29, 2002 meeting. The Committee's recommendation on each is denoted in **bold type**.

Based on comments received at several community meetings, Delta Protection Commission staff is recommending that all voting members on the Delta RC&D Council be landowners and/or residents within the proposed Delta RC&D Area.

RC&D Council

Option 1: 20 – 23 voting members

- Five (or possibly up to eight) Delta Reclamation District representatives
- Seven Delta area Resource Conservation District representatives
- Three regional government representatives
- Five County Supervisors

Option 2: 26 – 29 voting members

- Five (or possibly up to eight) Delta Reclamation District representatives
- Seven Delta area Resource Conservation Districts representatives
- Three regional government representatives
- Five County Supervisors
- Five County Farm Bureau representatives
- One Delta Chambers and Visitors Bureau representative

Option 3: 32 – 35 voting members*

- **Five (or possibly up to eight) Delta Reclamation District representatives**
- **Seven Delta area Resource Conservation District representatives**
- Three regional government representatives
- Five County Supervisors
- **Five County Farm Bureau representatives**
- **One Delta Chambers and Visitors Bureau representative**
- **Six Delta area land trust representatives**

Note: Letters have been sent to all above entities seeking support and indication of interest in sitting on the Delta RC&D Council.

*At this time, members of the Agriculture Committee recommend a variation of Option 3: Delta Protection Commissioners representing SACOG, SJCOG, ABAG, Delta county Boards of Supervisors, and State agencies have been recommended to act as advisory, non-voting members on the Delta RC&D Council if approved.

The following entities could be advisory (non-voting) Delta RC&D Council members:

CA State Dept. of Fish and Game
CA Dept. of Food and Agriculture
CA Dept. of Water Resources
CA Dept. of Boating and Waterways
CA Dept. of Parks and Recreation
CA State Lands Commission
Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
Solano County Board of Supervisors
Yolo County Board of Supervisors
Sacramento County Board of Supervisors
San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors
Association of Bay Area Governments
Sacramento Area Council of Governments
San Joaquin Council of Governments

RC&D Area

Originally, the proposed Delta RC&D Area encompassed the Legal Delta, as defined in State Water Code Section 12220. Input from community meetings has suggested that this area be scaled back to exclude areas within incorporated cities, or focus on just the Primary Zone, over which the Commission has jurisdiction. The interest of other entities, referenced above, will ultimately determine the shape of the Delta RC&D Area; this can change over time as the Council permits.

Option 1 – Entire Legal Delta (Delta Primary and Secondary Zones), including incorporated urban areas (***note:*** the inclusion of incorporated urban areas in the Delta RC&D Area does not imply voting power; the Bylaws would determine voting procedures)

Option 2 – Entire Legal Delta, plus outlying areas covered by local Resource Conservation Districts that are interested in participating on the Council.

Option 3 – Delta Primary Zone, plus the agricultural areas surrounding Isleton that are in the Secondary Zone

Option 4 – Delta Primary Zone, plus all agricultural areas in the Secondary Zone in Contra Costa and San Joaquin Counties in addition to areas surrounding Isleton

Attachment 1: Potential Membership of Delta RC&D Council

Option 1 – Delta Protection Commission members representing Delta Reclamation Districts, with a potential increase in representation from South, Central, and West Delta Reclamation Districts, plus seven Delta area Resource Conservation Districts (20 – 23 voting members)

- (2) North Delta Reclamation Districts
- (1 or 2) South Delta Reclamation Districts
- (1 or 2) Central Delta Reclamation Districts
- (1 or 2) West Delta Reclamation Districts
- (1) Florin Resource Conservation District
- (1) Lower Cosumnes Resource Conservation District
- (1) San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District
- (1) Contra Costa Resource Conservation District
- (1) Ulati Resource Conservation District
- (1) Dixon Resource Conservation District
- (1) Yolo County Resource Conservation District
- (1) Sacramento Area Council of Governments
- (1) Association of Bay Area Governments
- (1) San Joaquin County Council of Governments
- (1) Sacramento County Board of Supervisors
- (1) Yolo County Board of Supervisors
- (1) Solano County Board of Supervisors
- (1) Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
- (1) San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors

Option 2 – Option 1, plus County Farm Bureaus and the Delta Chambers and Visitors Bureau (26 – 29 voting members)

(20-23)[*See Option 1, above*]

- (1) Sacramento County Farm Bureau
- (1) San Joaquin County Farm Bureau
- (1) Contra Costa County Farm Bureau
- (1) Yolo County Farm Bureau
- (1) Solano County Farm Bureau
- (1) Delta Chambers and Visitors Bureau

Option 3 – Option 2, plus local land trusts (32 – 35 voting members)*

(26-29)[*See Option 2, above*]

- (1) The Nature Conservancy
- (1) Solano County Farmlands & Open Space Foundation (Solano Land Trust)
- (1) Yolo Land Trust
- (1) North Delta Conservancy
- (1) American Farmland Trust
- (1) Agricultural Trust of Contra Costa County

*At this time, members of the Agriculture Committee recommend a variation of Option 3: Delta Protection Commissioners representing SACOG, SJCOG, ABAG, Delta county Boards of Supervisors, and State agencies have been recommended to act as advisory, non-voting members on the Delta RC&D Council if approved.

**APPLICATION FOR
RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM ASSISTANCE**

DATE: [Date]

TO: The Honorable Ann M. Veneman, Secretary of Agriculture

THROUGH: Pearlie Reed, Chief
Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA
Washington, D.C. 20013-2890

We, the Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council, do hereby apply for designation as a Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area and have ratified this application. We agree to support the RC&D program to improve the well being of our Delta Area residents and communities.

By: _____
Patrick N. McCarty

Title: Chairman, Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council

**APPLICATION FOR
RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM ASSISTANCE**

**FOR THE
DELTA
RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA**

State of California

[Date]

With Assistance From:

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Natural Resources Conservation Service
545 Main Street, Suite B-1
Morro Bay, CA 93442**

DELTA
RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA
CALIFORNIA

PREFACE

The goals and objectives of the Delta Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council were formulated through a comprehensive public participation process that involved residents and interests from throughout the Delta RC&D Area. A Steering Committee was formed, and held initial outreach meetings early in 2002 with representatives from the farm bureaus, planning and community development departments, Agricultural Commissioners, land trusts, and existing Resource Conservation Districts, in each of the five Counties represented by this proposal. In addition to regular Steering Committee meetings (held every other month) during the development of this application, three community meetings were held at various locations within the proposed Delta RC&D Area in 2002.

Representatives from local governments and special districts, State agencies, County Farm Bureaus, County Agricultural Commissioners, local land trusts and nonprofit organizations, local Resource Conservation Districts, and regional Chambers of Commerce served on the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee has developed a draft Interim Area Plan with the assistance of local residents, agencies, and organizations; this plan addresses regional issues such as resource protection, economic development, and community development.

The draft Interim Area Plan contains goals that address resource and other development issues facing residents in the RC&D Area. The Steering Committee believes that, because of the local partnerships that have been developed, and continue to develop, the RC&D Council will be successful in implementing its goals. The RC&D application is actively supported by most of the proposed RC&D Area, with some outlying areas to be potentially included in the future. The RC&D Council is eager to be officially recognized as a RC&D, and is currently in a position to partner with other entities in the implementation of the draft Interim Area Plan.

SUMMARY

Tribal Reservations

There are no known tribal groups or lands in the Delta Resource Conservation and Development Area.

Counties

The proposed Delta Resource Conservation and Development area includes some rural portions of San Joaquin, Sacramento, Yolo, Solano, and Contra Costa Counties, covering approximately 500,000 acres (~800 square miles).

Sponsors

Note: This section will be completed as Delta Protection Commission staff receives signatory pages from sponsoring entities. An update on signatory pages received as of 9/26/02 will be given at the meeting.

We have received letters of support from the following individuals and organizations:

- San Joaquin County Resource Conservation District
- Pat Walsh, President, Bethel Island Chamber of Commerce
- Bethel Island Marketing Alliance
- Senator Tom Torlakson
- Bethel Island Municipal Improvement District
- Isleton Chamber of Commerce
- North Delta Water Agency

Note: This section will be completed as Delta Protection Commission staff receives support letters from groups and individuals. An update on support letters received as of 9/26/02 will be given at the meeting.

Ex-Officio Members: State of California Agencies and local government representatives:

- Dept. of Fish and Game
- Dept. of Water Resources
- Dept. of Food and Agriculture
- Dept. of Boating and Waterways
- Dept. of Food and Agriculture
- State Lands Commission
- Sacramento Area Council of Governments
- Association of Bay Area Governments
- San Joaquin Council of Governments
- Sacramento County Board of Supervisors
- Yolo County Board of Supervisors
- Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
- Solano County Board of Supervisors
- San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors

Brief Area Description

The proposed Delta Resource Conservation and Development Area is the Primary Zone of the Legal Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, as defined by the Delta Protection Act of 1992 (reference). No incorporated cities are included within the Primary Zone of the Legal Delta; it is a largely rural agricultural area. Rural communities within the Delta Primary Zone include Clarksburg, Courtland, Walnut Grove, Locke, and Ryde. In addition, undeveloped areas around Isleton are included in the RC&D area.

The Delta is located in California's Central Valley, east of Suisun Marsh and San Francisco Bay. The Delta Resource Conservation and Development Area covers portions of five counties: northern San Joaquin County, southwestern Sacramento County, southern Yolo County, southeastern Solano County, and eastern Contra Costa County (see enclosed map denoting the Delta RC&D Area). The total area is approximately 500,000 acres. In 2000, the population in the Area was approximately 35,000. The predominant industry in the area is agriculture; recreation and tourism are also popular in the area.

Council Primary Contact

Jeff Rodriguez, Acting Coordinator
545 Main Street, Suite B1
Morro Bay, CA 93442

Congressional Delegation

Senators Diane Feinstein (D-CA)
Barbara Boxer (D-CA)

Representatives Mike Thompson
Doug Ose
George Miller
Ellen Tauscher
Richard Pombo

DELTA
RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA
CALIFORNIA

Council and Area Name: Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council

General Description of the Area

The Delta Resource Conservation and Development Area is the Primary Zone of the Legal Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, as defined by the Delta Protection Act of 1992 (Public Resources Code, Sections 21080.22 et seq.). It is located in the Central Valley region of California, just east of Suisun Marsh and San Francisco Bay. The Delta is a unique geographic area in California, a low-lying region of rich mineral and peat soils, composed of islands created largely by humans as they diked and drained the prehistoric marshes of the region.

The Delta Resource Conservation and Development Area includes approximately 500,000 acres of waterways, levees, cultivated farmlands, and rural communities. It extends over portions of five Counties: San Joaquin, Yolo, Sacramento, Contra Costa, and Solano. The Delta's rich peat soil in the lower elevations of the central Delta and the mineral soils in surrounding upland areas support a strong agricultural economy.

Delta lands provide access to over 1,000 miles of rivers and sloughs that wind through the Area; water covers approximately 50,000 to 60,000 acres in the Delta region. The Area contains approximately 450,000 acres of agricultural land and over 100 marinas and park facilities, including Brannan Island State Recreation Area and Delta Meadows River Park. The Delta RC&D Area also includes Dept. of Fish and Game's Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area in Solano and Yolo Counties, part of the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in Sacramento County, and could include the future North Delta National Wildlife Refuge, currently planned for portions of Yolo and Solano Counties.

The Delta's waterways and upland areas provide year-round and seasonal habitat for various aquatic and terrestrial species, including eleven threatened and endangered species listed by State (CA Dept. of Fish and Game [DFG]) and/or federal agencies (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS] or National Marine Fisheries Service [NMFS]):

- Swainson's hawk (status: Threatened, DFG)
- Delta smelt (status: Threatened, USFWS)
- California black rail (status: Threatened, DFG)
- Central Valley steelhead (status: Threatened, NMFS)
- Central Valley spring-run chinook salmon (status: Threatened, NMFS and DFG)
- Sacramento winter-run chinook salmon (status: Endangered, NMFS and DFG)
- Sacramento splittail (status: Threatened, USFWS)
- California clapper rail (status: Endangered, USFWS and DFG)
- Bank swallow (status: Threatened, DFG)
- Riparian brush rabbit (status: Endangered, USFWS and DFG)
- Giant garter snake (status: Threatened, USFWS and DFG)

Socio-Economic Information

Most of the Delta's population is located in the urban areas on uplands on the periphery of the Delta, but there are significant populations on six islands: Brannan-Andrus, Bethel, Byron, Grand, Hotchkiss, and New Hope. Most of the remaining Delta islands are devoted to agriculture. The Delta's peripheral urban areas include all or portions of Sacramento, West Sacramento, Elk Grove, Stockton, Tracy, Brentwood, Oakley, Discovery Bay, Antioch, Pittsburg, Rio Vista, and Isleton. There are several smaller unincorporated rural communities dispersed throughout the Delta, particularly in the Primary Zone, the proposed RC&D Area; some of these communities are formally recognized as being historically significant in California's early development.

The majority of the Delta RC&D Area is rural, and is dependent mainly upon the Area's agricultural industry. Agriculture and related service industries have the largest economic impact on the area, with an estimated crop and total sales value of more than \$2 billion annually within the five Delta counties (*source: 2001 Crop Reports for Sacramento, Solano, Yolo, San Joaquin, and Contra Costa Counties*). This figure only partially reflects the critical importance of agriculture to the Delta's regional economy; it does not take into account processing, transportation, marketing, or other agriculture-related services which cumulatively multiply that figure, in some cases by a factor of about eight.

Recreation and tourism are also prosperous Delta industries, with fishing and wildlife viewing-related activities occurring year-round, and boating-specific activities occurring from late spring to early fall. An economic report on the impact of Delta-area boating and fishing activities, prepared for the Delta Protection Commission in 1998, found that boaters and anglers spend over \$810 million in and around the Delta annually. This figure does not account for land-based day trips and other recreational activities (such as wildlife observation) that also occur in the Delta on a regular basis (*source: The Economic Impact of Recreational Boating and Fishing in the Delta, November 1998*).

Within the ten geographic census tracts that make up the Delta Primary Zone area, median household income ranges from \$30,000 to \$93,915, and the percentage of the population for which poverty status is determined within each of the ten census tracts ranges from 5.4% to 36.1%. Among the ten census tracts, the percentage of the population which is under 18 years of age ranges from 8.4% to 28.8%, and the percentage which is over 65 years of age ranges from 6.4% to 18.8% (*source: Census 2000 data*).

**DELTA
RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA
CALIFORNIA**

DRAFT INTERIM AREA PLAN

LAND CONSERVATION ELEMENT

The purpose of which shall be to control erosion and sedimentation, and promote long-term agricultural land preservation, agricultural sustainability, levee stability, and resource protection.

- 1. Agricultural Sustainability**
 - a. Attraction of new and expanded agricultural support service industries.**
 - b. Investigation of markets for existing crops and development of new crops for existing and future markets (e.g., energy production).**
 - c. Regional marketing campaign promoting Delta agricultural products.**
 - d. Assistance to landowners in taking voluntary actions to meet regulatory standards.**
- 2. Farmland Preservation**
 - a. Identification and protection of high-value, productive agricultural lands.**
 - b. Assistance to landowners on tax and incentive programs (e.g., easements).**
 - c. Development of solutions to agriculture/urban interface problems.**
- 3. Subsidence Reversal**
 - a. Production of soil-building crops.**
 - b. Promotion of the use of clean dredged sediments in increasing land elevations.**
- 4. Levee Stability**
 - a. Protection of life and property from impacts associated with flooding.**
 - b. Coordination of permit reviews and guidelines to facilitate levee maintenance and dredging.**
 - c. Promotion of geotechnical methods of accreting sediment to protect levees from erosion.**
 - d. Development of a long-term funding source for channel dredging and levee maintenance.**

WATER MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

The purpose of which shall be to provide for water conservation and water quality improvement for agricultural, recreational, and fish and wildlife uses, to ensure adequate flood flow capacity in Delta channels, and to improve water quality through management and control of agricultural and non-point source pollution.

- 1. Homeland Security: Promote adequate protection of the State's critical Delta freshwater resources and levee infrastructure from terrorist activity.**

- a. Encourage law enforcement to train Delta residents in the identification of, and procedures in dealing with, potential or suspected terrorist activity.
 - b. Establish a comprehensive reporting system through which suspicious activity can be reported and addressed quickly.
- 2. Protection of water quality for all beneficial uses in the Delta and the State.
 - a. Support funding for salinity control programs and projects.
 - b. Support funding for monitoring and remediation of pathogen- and bacteria-based pollution in areas of water contact recreation.
 - c. Support projects that diminish the levels of mercury and other contaminants in Delta waterways.
- 3. Preservation of water quantity and elevation.
 - a. Encourage voluntary landowner participation in water conservation programs.
 - b. Promote sound agricultural, recreational, and environmental water management practices.
- 4. Promotion of programs that address point and non-point source water pollution.
 - a. Encourage pilot studies of “biofilter” wetlands to remove pollutants from the system.
 - b. Promote development of technically defensible water quality standards by regulators.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

The purpose of which shall be to develop the area’s agricultural and recreational resources to the benefit of Delta residents and the regional economy, evaluate and develop new resource-based industries, improve the quality of rural housing, health, and safety, and satisfy transportation and communication needs.

- 1. Stabilization and expansion of agricultural industry.
 - a. Attract agricultural support industries for existing Delta crops.
 - b. Develop new crops in accordance with new markets (e.g., biomass generation opportunities).
- 2. Promotion and expansion of recreation and tourism industries.
 - a. Pursue establishment of a distinct State-recognized Tourism Region for the Delta.
 - b. Pursue public recreational facilities and opportunities on publicly-owned land.
 - c. Promote public-private partnerships in the provision of recreation services.
- 3. Promote education and outreach to Delta residents and visitors.
 - a. Provide up-front consultation, coordination, and garner community support for RC&D projects and programs.
 - b. Encourage development of scientific research and educational facilities to inform and educate populations about the Delta’s local, Statewide, and National significance.
 - c. Promote the inclusion of interpretive displays and trails on publicly owned Delta lands.

- d. Promote agriculture-based tourism activities.
- 4. Improvement of rural infrastructure and public services.
 - a. Encourage enhanced communication and sharing of resources among local emergency services entities.
 - b. Support increased employment and presence of law enforcement officials.
 - c. Support enhanced cellular communications systems in the Delta area.
- 5. Raise awareness of the Delta's history and cultural environment.
 - a. Promote art and music events in association with area museums and galleries.
 - b. Promote theme festivals in Delta communities.
 - c. Develop information on interpretive walking tours of historic Delta towns.

OTHER ELEMENTS

HABITAT PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT

The purpose of which shall be to preserve and enhance critical habitat for endangered and threatened species as well as other native Delta species, control non-native and invasive plant, animal, and invertebrate species that adversely impact native species, and demonstrate the important role of wildlife-friendly agricultural practices in the Delta ecosystem.

- 1. Preservation and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat.
 - a. Determine appropriate areas and corridors where projects would yield the greatest species benefit.
 - b. Pursue integration of County Habitat Conservation Plans into larger habitat restoration efforts.
- 2. Development and strategies for wildlife-friendly agriculture and agriculture-friendly habitat restoration.
 - a. Promote incentives for voluntary seasonal flooding of Delta agricultural lands to maximize wildlife use those lands.
 - b. Pursue adequate buffers on restored properties, not on nearby farmland.
 - c. Pursue "good neighbor" policies, "safe harbor" agreements, and other landowner assurances from regulatory agencies only when appropriate as related to restoration activities.
- 3. Facilitate funding and implementation of non-native invasive species control programs.
 - a. Provide leadership in coordination of existing State, Federal, and local non-profit agency efforts to educate and control non-native invasive species.
 - b. Develop a long-term funding source to fund non-native invasive species control programs.

DELTA
RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA
CALIFORNIA

PURPOSE FOR CREATION

MISSION

To maintain and enhance, in balance, the unique agricultural, recreational, and environmental resources of the Delta, to the benefit of all Delta residents and communities.

VISION

The Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council serves as an advocate for citizens, landowners, business owners, local communities, and the Delta regional economy. It assists local residents in defining, addressing, and finding creative solutions to economic problems in their communities.

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RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA
CALIFORNIA

COUNCIL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives of the Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council were identified through a comprehensive public planning process. A Steering Committee including a diverse representation of County officials, local land trusts and nonprofit organizations, and Resource Conservation Districts held regular meetings and three community workshops at various Delta locations in 2002. Delta residents and interests and State agency representatives contributed to the goals and objectives, providing a broad perspective to the Steering Committee.

A draft Interim Area Plan was formulated to help identify and address Delta communities' economic and social issues, resource protection issues, and community development issues. There were numerous opportunities for Delta residents to assist in helping to shape the draft Area Plan.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Delta's regional economy has been suffering a depression in light of the closures and relocations of numerous processing facilities and other agricultural service industries locally, as well as depressed crop prices in general from international competition. The Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council hopes to improve the Delta's economy by:

- Stabilizing and expanding agriculture-related industries, in light of current and future markets;
- Conducting outreach to Delta residents to get them involved in RC&D activities;
- Promoting cultural events and theme festivals in Delta communities.
- Showcasing the quality of the Delta's agricultural products at local fairs and events.
- Promoting the regional agricultural industry through agri-tourism, education, and demonstration of the role of local agriculture in reducing the State's and Nation's dependence on foreign products.
- Providing needed recreational facilities and opportunities, and ensuring that these are adequately maintained and supervised.

RESOURCE PROTECTION GOALS

The natural environment of the Delta is critical to the recovery of State and Federal threatened and endangered species; it is hence a heavily regulated environment. Improvements in the Delta's habitat conditions is paramount to protection of the Delta's other resource values, such as the preservation of land for agriculture, the continued provision of recreational opportunities, and Statewide values such as the provision of clean water to agricultural and urban uses. The Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council hopes to protect the unique resources of the Delta for all beneficial uses by:

- Promoting wise water conservation and pollution control/management practices in the lands and waters of the Delta area.
- Promoting the protection of adequate water quality and quantity for all beneficial uses in the Delta, the State, and the Nation.
- Supporting sound land management practices, such as erosion control and subsidence reversal.
- Promoting long-term stability of Delta levees to protect its land and water resources.
- Developing a plan for habitat restoration that maximizes benefit to species while minimizing impacts to existing land uses and the regional economy.
- Encouraging development of alternative energy sources, and decreasing dependence upon foreign products and unsustainable fuel resources.

DELTA
RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA
CALIFORNIA

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

The Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council is an organization that gives residents in the rural areas of San Joaquin, Sacramento, Yolo, Solano, and Contra Costa Counties a chance to be proactive in initiating economic and social improvement in their communities. The Council is governed by its voting membership, who is in turn responsible for the Council's decisions.

In addition to the above, the Council's Officers, once elected (expected in 2003), will be responsible for tasks described in the Bylaws, in accordance with the direction of the full Council.

Currently, the Council's activities are directed primarily by the Steering Committee. If this application is successful, after approval and adoption of the Bylaws, the Steering Committee will continue to provide direction until the Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council membership and officers are elected and assume leadership in 2003.

ORGANIZED COMMUNITY GROUP

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

In January 2001, representatives of the San Joaquin Resource Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) approached staff of the Delta Protection Commission, a State-mandated local land use planning agency, to familiarize them with the national Resource Conservation and Development Program. Delta Protection Commission staff realized the potential value of the Program in assisting Delta communities with identifying issues and evaluating opportunities to improve the depressed Delta regional economy, and brought the concept before the full Commission for its consideration.

The Delta Protection Commission then directed its staff to hold a number of informational meetings with officials and representatives of agricultural and resource organizations in each of the five Delta counties, to introduce them to the Resource Conservation and Development Program, offer examples of how it could address issues specific to each County, and generally gauge support for the concept. The Resource Conservation and Development concept was largely supported among meeting participants, many of whom opted to participate at Steering Committee meetings in the preparation of a draft Interim Area Plan and this application. Three community meetings were subsequently held in Walnut Grove, Clarksburg, and near Stockton, CA, to introduce the Resource Conservation and Development concept to Delta residents and to offer opportunities for broader public input into the development of the draft Interim Area Plan and this application.

Nine months and numerous meetings after being introduced to the Resource Conservation and Development Program, the Steering Committee, with public input and support, had an approved draft Interim Area Plan and Bylaws, and submitted an application to the Secretary of Agriculture to be recognized as the Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council.

SPONSORS

Note: This section will be completed as Delta Protection Commission staff receives signatory pages from sponsoring entities. An update on signatory pages received as of 9/26/02 will be given at the meeting.

COUNCIL OFFICERS/BOARD OF DIRECTORS (ACTING)

President:	To be selected in 2003
Vice President:	To be selected in 2003
Secretary:	To be selected in 2003
Chief Financial Officer:	To be selected in 2003

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The Delta Resource Conservation and Development Steering Committee, through a public review process, has completed its draft Interim Area Plan and is in the process of strengthening and building new partnerships, as well as generating further interest in the sponsorship and support for what is expected to be the new Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council.

LEVELS OF SUPPORT

There has been a lot of support from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State and neighboring district offices (particularly Stockton and Sacramento). The State office provided the commitment to assist the Steering Committee through the development of this application and draft Interim Area Plan.

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

The Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council's draft Interim Area Plan was developed through a public review process, guided by a Steering Committee representing County officials, local land trusts, local nonprofit organizations, seven local Resource Conservation Districts, North and South Delta Reclamation Districts, and individual Delta residents. A total of seven public meetings and community workshops were held during the development of the draft Interim Area Plan in 2002. Efforts to reach new constituents were initiated with press releases, circulation of fliers announcing community meetings, personal telephone and e-mail contacts with community representatives, and utilization of USDA NRCS staff contacts. Also, Steering Committee

members worked closely with local government officials representing the rural Delta areas of their respective counties and cities. The Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council will continue to reach out to these rural Delta communities as outlined in the goals and objectives in the draft Interim Area Plan, which is designed to help these communities address the various economic and social issues facing them today.

DELTA
RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT AREA
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ACTIVITY REPORT

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES DURING THE PAST YEAR

- How many full Council meetings were held?
A total of two full Council meetings and four Steering Committee meetings were held.
- How many executive committee (board) meetings were held?
The Council has not yet adopted an executive committee or board of directors.
- How many resource committees have been formed?
The Council has not yet formed any resource committees.
- Did the resource committees hold any meetings? If so, how many meetings were held?
No resource committee meetings were held. Three public workshops were held in 2002 to introduce the Resource Conservation and Development Program to Delta citizens.

PROJECT ACTIVITY

- How many projects are recorded in your RC&D database?
There are currently no projects in the Delta Resource Conservation and Development database; no database has been established to date.
- How many projects were adopted during the past fiscal year?
No projects were adopted during the past fiscal year.
- How many projects were completed during the past fiscal year?
No projects have been completed in the past year.
- What was the Council's role in each of these projects?
Not applicable.

INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

- Were other agencies involved in the Area Plan preparation?
Yes: six State agencies, five County entities (Boards of Supervisors), and three regional councils of government (COGs) were involved in preparation of the draft Interim Area Plan.
- How many State and Federal agencies other than NRCS?
Six State agencies.
- What other (but not in the database) activities were agencies involved in with the Council in the past fiscal year?
The Council's activities in 2002 have been focused on educating the public about the national Resource Conservation and Development program, generating community support for this application, and formulating suggestions for potential projects a Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council could pursue.

INCORPORATED STATUS

- Is the Council incorporated?
The Council is not yet incorporated.
- If not, is an application being prepared?
Yes.
- Has an application been submitted?
No.
- Is this status pending?
Yes.

NONPROFIT STATUS

- Does the Council have nonprofit status?
The Council does not yet have nonprofit status.
- If not, is an application being prepared?
Yes.

REQUIRED CLAUSES

The local sponsors make application for federal assistance under the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 Public Law 97-98, 16 U.S.C. 3452-3461 as amended by Public Law 101-624, Section 1452.

The Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council's program will be conducted in compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions as contained in Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (Pub. Law 100-259), and other nondiscrimination statutes: namely, Section 504, of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and in accordance with regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture (7 CFR-15, Subparts A&B) which provide that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, or handicap/disability be excluded from participation in , or be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial (or technical) assistance from the Department of Agriculture or any agency thereof.

The Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council agrees that the signing of this document constitutes agreement to comply with federal laws concerning restrictions on lobbying, a drug-free workplace, and responsibilities for procurement, suspension, and disbarment.

The Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council has had this application reviewed by the State. Comments made through the State single point of contact have been considered prior to submission of the application and those all-applicable procedures have been followed. An environmental impact statement will not be prepared during development of the Area plan, but an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement will be prepared concurrently with the development of each project, when applicable, in accordance with federal procedures.

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Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council, California

By: _____ Date: _____
Patrick N. McCarty, Chairman

***This action was authorized at an official meeting of the
Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council on September 26, 2002***

USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service

Concurred by: _____ Date: _____
Jim Kocsis, State Conservationist

DELTA
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SIGNATORY PAGES

“We, the undersigned sponsoring local organizations, offer the above information in support of our request for designation of RC&D Program assistance. This application represents a true picture of the conditions in our Area. Further, we agree to support this Area and Council if designated and to participate in all its undertakings. Witness the signatures of the undersigned on the dates shown below.”

These actions were authorized at an official meeting of the Delta Resource Conservation and Development Council on September 26, 2002.

Sponsoring Organization:	By:	Title:
Address:	City:	State:
Signature:	Date:	